



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------	------------------

10/672,370

09/25/2003

Laurence E. Dahners

421/75/2

3033

25297 7590 09/03/2008
JENKINS, WILSON, TAYLOR & HUNT, P. A.
Suite 1200 UNIVERSITY TOWER
3100 TOWER BLVD.,
DURHAM, NC 27707

EXAMINER

SWIGER III, JAMES L

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3733

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

09/03/2008

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/672,370	Applicant(s) DAHNER, LAURENCE E.	
	Examiner JAMES L. SWIGER III	Art Unit 3733	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 May 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 02 August 2006 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>5/5/2008</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION***Double Patenting***

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the “right to exclude” granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 1-4 and 7-20 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-4 of U.S. Patent No. 6,379,359.

Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because each claims a substantially similar invention having a longitudinal plate, with a flat plate portion and an extending portion, a pin-type end portion, a shoulder-like portion, and a downward extension. The difference between the application claims and the patent claims lies in the fact that the patent claims include more elements and are thus much specific. Thus the invention of the patent claims are in effect a “species” of the “generic” invention of the application claims. It has been held

Art Unit: 3733

that the generic invention is “anticipated” by the “species”. See *In re Goodman*, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993). Since the application claims are anticipated by the patent claims, they are not patentably distinct from the patent claims.

In addition, Claim 6 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 5 of U.S. Patent No. 6,379,359. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because each claims a substantially similar invention having a longitudinal plate, with a flat plate portion and an extending portion, a pin-type end portion, a shoulder-like portion, downward extension, and further having screws.

In addition, Claim 7 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claim 6 of U.S. Patent No. 6,379,359. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because each claims a substantially similar invention having a longitudinal plate, with a flat plate portion and an extending portion, a pin-type end portion, a shoulder-like portion, a downward extension, and further a shoulder.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

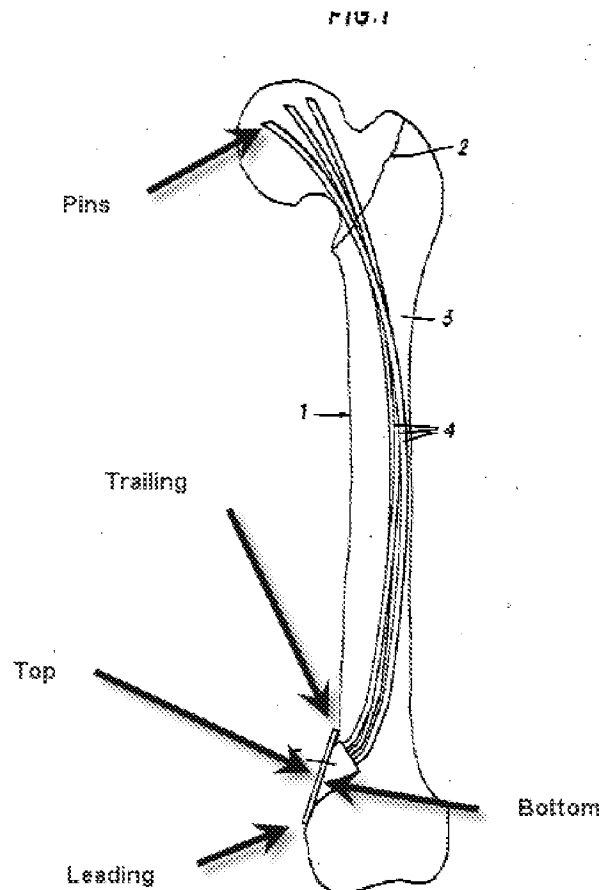
A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-4, 6-16, 18-22, and 25-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ender (US Patent 4,467,793). Ender discloses a longitudinally extending

Art Unit: 3733

plate (5) made of resilient material comprising a surface at one end having a top and bottom and leading and trailing end that is sized to overlay a fracture site, and further has a longitudinally extending body element integral with the plate element (see drawing below) and is further considered adjacent but spaced apart from the trailing end of the surface of the plate element and has apertures (6).



The overhanging heel portion is adjacent to the trailing end and extends downwardly below the location at which the resilient body element is integral to the surface of the plate element. The heel serves to assist stabilize the fracture site. It is

Art Unit: 3733

capable of preventing over-reduction. The intrafocal plate also has a body element (4) which extends down and outward from the bottom of the surface (see drawing) and further has a pin element (see drawing above). The body elements connects at a location that is between the leading end and trailing end. The intrafocal plate further has a shoulder at the juncture of the body element and surface and further defines an acute angle (adjacent to the trailing end portion in the drawing above). The body element is considered sinuous, as it is windy and curved.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

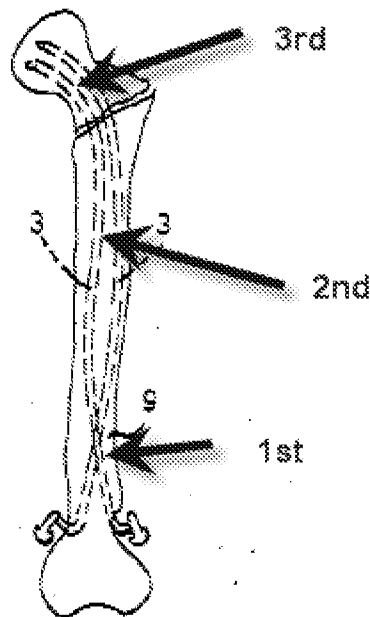
(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 5 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ender (US Patent 4,467,793) in view of Tornier (US Patent 4,483,335). Ender discloses the claimed invention except for a plate including one or more screws. Tornier discloses a plate system that has a screw (9) for insertion of the apertures defined in the plate. The screw assists in affixing the plate to the fracture site. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to construct the device of Ender having at least one or more screws in view of Tornier to better affix the plate to the fracture site.

Claims 23-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ender '793 in view of Firica et al. (US Patent 5,013,314). Ender discloses the claimed

Art Unit: 3733

invention except for a body element having three distinct sections curving in different directions, towards and away from the plate. Firica et al. disclose a plate system having a body element that has a first portion curving away from the plate portion, a second portion curving toward the plate section and a third portion curving toward the plate element. See drawing below.



It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to construct the device of Ender having a body element with multiple curved sections in view of Firica et al. so that the body section can have an improved grip with respect to the fracture site and have improved healing and stabilization.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-26 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JAMES L. SWIGER III whose telephone number is (571)272-5557. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, 9:00am to 5:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eduardo Robert can be reached on 571-272-4719. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3733

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/JAMES L SWIGER/
Examiner, Art Unit 3733

/Eduardo C. Robert/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3733